

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicant's representative would like to thank the Examiner for courtesies extended in the telephone interviews/conferences conducted on May 24, 2004, June 17, 2004, and June 23, 2004, in the present application.

Applicant submits this Statement to comply with the requirements of M.P.E.P. § 713.04.

In the telephonic interview conducted on June 23, 2004, the following was discussed:

A. Identification of claims discussed:

Independent Claims 1, 6, 8, 9, 12, and 18.

B. Identification of prior art discussed:

Flowers, Jr., et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5, 533,174).

C. Identification of principal proposed amendments:

Amendments of independent claims 1, 6, 8, 9, 12, and 18, as submitted in the Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 filed on May 21, 2004.

D. Brief Identification of principal arguments:

The rejection of claims 1-12 and 14-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Flowers is overcome by the amendments to independent claims 1, 6, 8, 9, 12, and 18, as submitted in the Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116

filed on May 21, 2004, for the reasons set forth in the arguments submitted therewith.

E. Results of the Interview:

The Examiner agreed that the Amendment filed on May 21, 2004, appeared to overcome the prior art of record (see also Advisory Action dated June 28, 2004, Continuation of 2 - Note, which confirmed that "*It does appear to the examiner that the revised claims overcome the art of record.*").

However, the Examiner indicated that further search and consideration would be necessary, and therefore, did not comment on the allowability of the amended claims.

Also, the Examiner indicated that the Amendment filed on May 21, 2004 would not be entered, since further search and consideration was deemed to be necessary prior to allowing the claims.

F. Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-21 are allowable for at least the reasons set forth in the Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 filed on May 21, 2004.

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

It is believed that no petition or fee is required. However, if the USPTO deems otherwise, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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